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IN WHAT RESPECTS SHOULD THE HIGH SCHOOL BE MODIFIED TO MEET TWENTIETH CENTURY DE- MANDS?

THE public high school is the center of our system of public education in the United States, and must continue to be the center around which all movements looking to educational advancement must gravitate. For a long time, however, it has been a sort of shuttlecock between the elementary school and the college, each jealously guarding what it considered its own sphere of usefulness and resenting vigorously any attempt at interference. In spite of the fact that we have no well-defined scheme of public education, the elementary school, the secondary school, the college and the professional school are all gradually finding their most natural and best adapted spheres of usefulness. But in order to meet the demands of this century and thereby do the greatest public service we suggest certain modifications in the high school.

We have been lamenting for many years the chasm between the eighth grade and the ninth grade or first year of the high school. We have written, talked, and experimented, but little has been gained. The secondary teacher blames the elementary teacher and the elementary teacher as regularly blames the secondary teacher. This will continue to be so until the elementary course is limited to six years and the secondary is begun about two years before the period of adolescence begins.

At present the break in the school course comes with the break in the natural, physical development. The fact that these come simultaneously means that the average child has much to contend with and so many leave our schools. Statistics show us that the number discontinuing their high-school work after they have completed two years is not large; and so these students, having completed two years of the secondary course will be many times more likely to continue in school than when the completion of the eighth grade marks the distinctive break.

Instead of this condition, which all admit to be bad, our scheme provides for six years' work in the elementary school, embodying all the essentials of the eight grades and casting out all the chaff, the padding, the non-essentials. The pupil by such a scheme finishes this course at the age of about twelve, enters directly upon his secondary work, does two years of such work and is well established in the school before he reaches the age of vagaries, hallucinations and the wild imaginations peculiar to this period of life. Under these conditions the teacher has only one great problem to solve instead of two and all her time, energy, and skill can be directed to this one which is at present divided in the attempt to solve at the same time two problems of equal difficulty.

The growth of the course of study in the secondary school has been a gradual evolution touching both the amount of time to be spent in completing the course, and the subject-matter of the course. Less than half a century ago high schools were very little known, and the course of study began with one group of studies offered for one year. From this simple condition, the evolution has gone on till most public high schools have two or three lines of study requiring four years to complete them. Some have a fifth year's work, and a few have a sixth year. The fifth and sixth years represent fairly the first two years of the college, and the work done in these years is accepted by the college, advanced credit toward graduation being given.

The curriculum ought to be broadened as well as extended in time so as to include a good commercial course, a good course in manual training, elementary agriculture, domestic science and military tactics. All these we view as phases of education, no one excluding any other. In some places all these things have already been accomplished and that at no great public expense. There is at present only an occasional school doing six years' work but this number is no smaller than was the number doing four years' work, if we look back a short life-time, and with the development from the present condition, twenty years hence will find a large amount of work, at present done in the college, satisfactorily done in the high school.

The second change ought to be made in the school day and the school year. We ought to lengthen the school day at least two hours, and this with a view to making it possible for some to do their required

amount of work in the forenoon and others in the afternoon. Some could then remain under the personal direction of the teacher for all their work, while others might attend for recitation only, and help to earn the living for the rest of the family by employment at such times as the school did not demand attendance. There are many reasons for adding about six weeks to the school year. In the first place the average boy or girl has an abnormal development physically, if free from school work for three months, and grows more during the vacation period than during the other nine months of the year. So we maintain that it will tend to produce a harmonious, physical development to reduce the long vacation by adding six weeks to the work of the year. From our point of view there is no more reason why schools should close for three months, during the summer season, than there would be to close other institutions for a like period, such as churches, business colleges, Y. M. C. A.'s, business houses, libraries, chautauquas, etc. There is more reason now for keeping the secondary and elementary schools open for at least half the summer than for having summer terms at the great universities and normal schools. The recent growth of summer schools in all parts of the country is the public demand for opportunity to do school work during the present vacation period. If we look back ten years even, we find very few summer schools when compared with the present number. An extension ought to be made which would include all schools from the elementary up, and this made a part of the regular school year's work.

We concede at present that the German finishes his education and is ready to enter upon the work of his profession from two to four years sooner than the average American. By extending our school day and the school year we can easily gain two years, by the time we complete the work of the professional school. What we may call the vacation or continuation school ought not to provide the same program as that furnished for the September semester but may be varied to give the greatest benefit. The evening school ought to be as permanent as the day school because it would extend the privileges of the high school to a large and ever increasing number who can not for economic reasons attend the day school. It is certainly in the interest of democracy to so arrange the curricula, the school year, the school

day and the school program as to make its privileges reach a larger number.

The evening school ought not to be subjected to severe grading, nor should the age limit be mentioned. The work now done by evening classes in the Y. M. C. A. and paid for by the student; the work now done by the several schools of correspondence could be better done and with much smaller outlay of money at public expense, if done in an evening school, and provision ought to be made in all cities for this kind of work. In order to develop the whole life of our students we must have a saner and more progressive management of athletics and social life. These are legitimate expressions of activity which ought to be fostered, not stifled. Athletics can not do for the young people in high school what ought to be done unless the school possesses from three to ten acres of land within easy reach of the school. Here all outdoor games for both boys and girls should be played and instruction given by an athletic director whose preparation for this particular work should be equal to that required of a teacher in any other department of school work. It goes without the saying that the school should have a gymnasium and in connection with it shower bath, swimming pool, running track, etc., so that when the weather does not permit of outdoor work, some proper exercise may be given indoors.

Some athletic work should be required daily of all students, except those physically unable to take such exercise. Credit toward graduation should be given for such work to the extent of one unit where fifteen or sixteen such units are required for graduation. Many young men and some young women may be kept in school by such kind of influence when all other kinds have failed. Military drill may properly form a part of the athletics for the boys or young men. We think athletics ought not to exist for the purpose of developing a few star athletics in any school and any system which falls short of a general application to the student body fails in its greatest good.

In direct connection with the play ground or athletic field an elementary course in agriculture ought to be given. This work should be placed on the same basis as other work; should be directed by one as completely equipped for this work as other teachers are for their work. The prospective farmer who enters a high school ought to have as good an opportunity as the prospective lawyer, doctor, minister,

because this school is free to all who are fitted to enjoy its privileges, but we all know that unless we have work in elementary agriculture the chance for the prospective farmer is not half so good as that of the aspirant to any of the professions. We ought to make this suggested change general and even up the opportunities.

The social life of the high school needs a more careful and closer supervision. The school building ought to be made the center of all social activity and this side of the student's life as carefully directed as his intellectual development. Community life ought to center about the school and all members of the school should soon come to learn that the school means more than simply a place to study books and recite lessons. All class parties, receptions, debates; all school contests, concerts, amateur theatricals, luncheons, banquets, etc., should be held in the school building and the young people taught to think of this as the place where their life interests center. These things presuppose the use of gas for heating and lighting, the purchase of chairs, tables, dishes, etc., for convenience in serving, the use of an assembly hall with some stage equipment, but all these things keep the mind of the student on the school and keep him in school. At the same time all spheres of activity are developed under wholesome direction.

Another modification which is perhaps needed as much as any before mentioned is that in regard to the salaries of the teachers. No profession demands a higher order of talent or a more extended preparation entailing greater expense, than that of the teaching profession, and yet the average salary is far below that of the unskilled laborer. Almost half of the teaching force of the country changes annually because other vocations are more attractive. All this is gravely detrimental to the cause of education and ought to be remedied. Foreign travel, constant study, rest from the exhausting work of the schoolroom are all necessary, but a very small per cent. of the teachers of the country can profit by these things because the salaries they receive are not enough to justify the extra expense. The demands on the profession have increased enormously during the past ten years and yet there has been no proportionate increase in the salaries. The average salary of men teachers in the United States is less than \$50.00 per month, and that for women is less than \$40.00 per month, and yet

the teacher must be cultured and refined; must move in refined society; dress well, live well, but the ordinary arithmetical calculations fail when the teacher attempts to do what has been suggested on a salary of \$40 or \$50 per month. The teacher's salary ought to be commensurate with the work performed.

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